



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF THE NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Great Falls Trap & Skeet Club Improvements

2. Type of Proposed Action:

- Remodeling bathrooms to make them handicap accessible.
- New power supply for trap field lights.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: Range improvements will occur on site of existing 30 year old range located at 183 Ulm North Frontage Rd., Ulm, MT. Two and one half miles north of Ulm on the frontage road and approximately six miles south of Great Falls on the same frontage road. Approximately 50 acres located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 34 & in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 33; T20N, R2E P.M.M. Cascade County, Montana (See Map 1).



**Map 1 – Area Map of Great Falls Trap & Skeet Club, located on the Frontage Rd.
off of I-15 between Ulm & Great Falls, MT.**

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

- (a)(i) shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;*
- (ii) may not limit the number of members;*
- (iii) may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and*
- (iv) shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or*
- (b) shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.*

5. Need for the Action(s): Current club house restrooms are not handicap accessible, necessitating the rental of handicap accessible "port-a-potty." Due to numerous user groups and events, suitable handicap restrooms are not always available.

The current electrical system is over 25 years old, has intermittent failures, is not energy efficient, and requires constant attention.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): Provide handicap accessible restroom facilities and update power system to current codes, provide lower consumption, and provide lights on two additional fields increasing the club's usage.

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

Range is approximately 50.5 acres, but improvements are limited to a much smaller area of less than one acre of the range.

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The surrounding area and most of range is or was formerly agricultural primarily used for dry land farming. The area affected is the existing +30 year old Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club.

9. Description of Project:

- Remodel existing men's and women's restrooms to make them handicap accessible.
- Install new updated wiring system for trap fields 5, A, B, 1, 2, 3 and 4. Installation will include removing existing panels, install new 400 amp Single Phase Service, 400 amp 30 circuit panel, 200 amp 42 circuit panel, seven control selector switches for trap lighting, piping and wiring for 14 light poles.

In Accordance With (IAW) contracts agreements with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, all projects are to be completed by June 30, 2011.

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) **Permits, Licenses and/or Overlapping Jurisdictions:** N/A

(b) **Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$16,858.50

11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

(Tiered EA from 2007 EA)

Cascade County Sheriff's Department, the Great Falls Police Department, Montana Highway Patrol, Boy Scouts, Air Force and Army National Guard, retriever club, hunter's education, 4-H, etc.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement: Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors. No additional public involvement was deemed necessary.

13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

14. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

James W. Burman, GFTSC, 2398 Old US Highway 91, Cascade, MT 59421, (406) 468-2751

15. Other Pertinent Information: Previous EA completed in 2010.

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: March 2, 2011

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** Remodeling bathrooms to make them handicap accessible and installing a new power supply for trap field lights
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Sports Grant money would be denied and the area will remain an active shooting complex without permanent handicapped accessible bathrooms and improved electrical and lighting on trap fields.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives: Two alternatives have been considered, **A** (Proposed Alternative) and **B** (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (**A**) nor the no action alternative (**B**) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

There are beneficial consequences to Acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative (A)** increased handicapped accessibility, improving shooting sports opportunities in the Great Falls area and reducing operational, manpower and maintenance expenses to maintain electrical and lighting systems on the trap fields.

The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be to not provide permanent handicapped accessible restrooms or improvements in lighting and power supply to trap, but to continue on with current trap range shooting operations and activities.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study: None

List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations): None

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		#9
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments

2. & 5. There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development.

9. This project uses no federal funds; therefore Federal 106 Regulations do not apply, nor is the proposed project on state owned property so the State Antiques Act also does not apply.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		#4
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments

4. The site is adjacent to surrounding agricultural land.

5. The proposed updates to the indoor bathrooms and the electrical system would meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large and improve the visitor's experience at the range.

7. Range provides year round controlled access and fulfils a need for law enforcement training, hunter education, bow-hunter safety, and public shooting, admitting the non-member general public for reasonable day-use fee.

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The project being proposed is on properties owned by the Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club. The low impact activities proposed, increased handicap accessibility, and the increased recreational opportunity, all indicate that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club's proposed alternative, to provide improved shooting opportunity and handicapped access is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) outlined in Part I paragraphs 2 & 10.

PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore an EIS is not required.

PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

James W. Burman, 2398 Old US Highway 91, Cascade, MT 59421
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

MS Wildlife Management
Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: May 28, 2011

Describe public involvement:

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Great Falls Tribune and on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website to allow an opportunity for public review. Additionally, the EA will be available for review on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website.